

**CS FOR HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 30(RES)**

**IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA**

**TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION**

**BY THE HOUSE RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**Offered: 3/29/06**

**Referred: Finance**

**Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES JOULE, Berkowitz, Kerttula, Samuels, Ramras**

**A RESOLUTION**

1 **Creating an Alaska Climate Impact Assessment Commission.**

2 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

3 **WHEREAS** recent weather patterns have created warming trends that have  
4 jeopardized the health and well-being of residents of communities and the natural resources  
5 on which they rely; and

6 **WHEREAS** flooding and erosion affects 184 coastal and river communities, or 86  
7 percent of Alaska communities, in both rural and urban areas of the state; and

8 **WHEREAS** communities on the coast are affected by flooding and erosion from the  
9 sea because of the delayed formation of protective shore ice in the fall; and

10 **WHEREAS** communities along riverbanks or in river deltas are susceptible to  
11 flooding and erosion caused by ice jams, snow and glacial melts, rising sea levels, changing  
12 river patterns, and heavy rainfall; and

13 **WHEREAS** permafrost is found beneath approximately 80 percent of the state; and

14 **WHEREAS**, in recent years, there has been widespread thawing of permafrost in  
15 some areas, causing land to slump and erode and causing serious damage to infrastructure;  
16 and

1       **WHEREAS** the thawing of the permafrost is likely to continue across the state and  
 2 will have an effect on future structures and development; and

3       **WHEREAS** fish and wildlife habitats are changing, affecting the accessibility and  
 4 viability of certain species; and

5       **WHEREAS** resource development and the revenue it generates are potentially  
 6 affected by the effects of climate change; and

7       **WHEREAS** the rapidly retreating sea ice affects polar route navigation and security  
 8 concerns; and

9       **WHEREAS** the state has only one employee working on these issues; and

10       **WHEREAS**, although the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment provides the necessary  
 11 scientific foundation in assessing current effects of climate change in the Arctic, it does not  
 12 address the economic effects on the State of Alaska; and

13       **WHEREAS** a comprehensive, preventative plan to address these issues will help save  
 14 lives, protect public health, preserve economic and resource development, and protect  
 15 valuable infrastructure;

16       **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Alaska State Legislature that there is created an Alaska  
 17 Climate Impact Assessment Commission; and be it

18       **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the commission shall consist of 15 members as  
 19 follows:

20               (1) two senators appointed by the president of the senate;

21               (2) two representatives appointed by the speaker of the house of  
 22 representatives; and

23               (3) 11 public members appointed jointly by the president of the senate and the  
 24 speaker of the house of representatives consisting of

25                       (A) one member who represents the Denali Commission;

26                       (B) one member from the University of Alaska with expertise in  
 27 climate impact effects;

28                       (C) one member who represents the Alaska Federation of Natives;

29                       (D) one member from the Department of Natural Resources;

30                       (E) one member knowledgeable in the engineering requirements for  
 31 public highway and facility construction and maintenance;

(F) two members who represent affected Alaska communities;

(G) two members who represent affected Alaska businesses;

(H) one member knowledgeable in the area of fish and game; and

(I) one member who represents Alaska youth, based on the recommendation of the Board of Regents of the University of Alaska; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the public members of the commission may receive compensation for per diem or reimbursement for travel or other expenses incurred in serving on the commission; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the commission may meet during and between legislative sessions; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the House and Senate Resources Committees may assign committee staff to provide support services for the commission; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the duties of the commission include the following:

(1) assess the current and potential effects of climate warming trends on the citizens, natural resources, public health, and economy of the state, in particular the adverse effects on natural resource development, forest safety, fish and game utilization, and transportation and community infrastructures;

(2) estimate costs to the state and its citizens of adverse effects associated with climate warming;

(3) identify specific circumstances of flooding and erosion that affect life, property, and economic and resource development in the state;

(4) examine the feasibility of alternatives to prevent and mitigate the effects of flooding and erosion;

(5) develop a policy to guide infrastructure investments in Alaska villages, cities, and boroughs that are most affected by flooding and erosion;

(6) recommend land use regulations, including area standards for designation of land prone to flooding and erosion;

(7) investigate and assess issues involving permafrost and damage caused by permafrost;

(8) recommend policies to decrease the negative effects of climate change; and

1                   (9) identify and coordinate efforts of mutual concern with federal agencies;  
2 and be it

3           **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the commission shall offer recommendations and  
4 provide possible solutions and preventative measures that can be implemented by Alaska  
5 communities and by the state and federal governments; and be it

6           **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the commission shall conduct eight hearings  
7 throughout the state to fulfill its purpose; and be it

8           **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the commission shall deliver a preliminary report of its  
9 findings to the legislature on March 1, 2007, and make a final report to the legislature on  
10 January 10, 2008, together with legislative proposals for consideration; and be it

11          **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the commission shall be available for legislative  
12 hearing on its recommendations; and be it

13          **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the commission shall be reevaluated at the conclusion  
14 of the second regular session of the Twenty-Fifth Alaska State Legislature.